

GRADUATION AND REDUCTION OF THE PRICE OF PUBLIC  
LANDS.

MEMORIAL

OF

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF ALABAMA,

ASKING

*The graduation and reduction of the price of the public lands in the State  
of Alabama which have been long in market and remain unsold.*

JANUARY 25, 1848.

Read, and referred to the Committee on Public Lands.

A JOINT MEMORIAL of the General Assembly of the State of Alabama to the Congress of  
the United States.

The General Assembly of the State of Alabama respectfully requests the Congress of the United States to graduate and reduce the price of the public lands within the State of Alabama which have been long in market and remain unsold, with a view of getting clear of the expenses of the land office system, and make those lands private property. There are some nineteen millions of acres of public lands within the State, which have been in market, some for twelve, some for twenty, and some for thirty years and upwards; and notwithstanding the several periods of a rise and fall of prices of products, and the great rise of lands, and speculation in them; and notwithstanding our citizens have been seized with a spirit of speculation, and have traversed the west and southwest in quest of public lands, yet so worthless are the barrens and mountains of Alabama, that but few tracts have been entered of this great waste. Congress has often been requested to graduate the prices, according to the periods of time they have been in market, and has hitherto refused to grant this most reasonable and just request. If ten cents per acre had been obtained for them twenty years since, it would have been a great benefit, both to the State and general governments. The one would have had the value of the property, and would have been free from the expenses of attending to it, whilst the other would have had more independent citizens. As it is, Congress owns valueless lands, and Alabama has an uninhabited desert, instead of a meritorious, tax-paying people. Then let your memorialist ask, why should Congress longer attempt to force up the prices of deserts and mountains, or why should Congress longer persist in asking the people as much for a bad article as for a good one? While those deserts and mountains

have been surrounded by inhabitants from fifty to two hundred years, are yet not worth twenty cents per acre, and in many cases not worth half that sum, what reason is there to conclude that similar lands are worth more money in Alabama, where there are fewer inhabitants, more recently settled, and the country less healthy? Your memorialist requests that Congress may reduce the price of said lands according to the periods of time that the several districts may have been in market, and securing rights of pre-emption to occupants for limited periods of time, at each stage of reduction.

*And be it resolved,* That the governor transmit a copy of the foregoing memorial to each of our Senators and Representatives in Congress.

L. P. WALKER,

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

JOHN ANTHONY WINSTON,

*President of the Senate.*

Approved January 7, 1848.

R. CHAPMAN.